

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

S E C R E T BRUSSELS 0284

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN POLITICAL UNITY AND US-EC RELATIONS

REF: ROME 338

1. ITALIAN THINKING ON PROBLEM OF COMBINING EUROPEAN POLITICAL UNITY WITH CLOSE AND COOPERATIVE US-EC RELATIONS WOULD CERTAINLY STRIKE A RESPONSIVE CHORD AMONG CONCERNED BELGIAN OFFICIALS AND, WE SUSPECT, IN THE OTHER SMALL COUNTRIES OF THE EC-NINE. WE FOUND REFTEL MOST STIMULATING AND HOPE EMBASSY ROME'S COMMENTS WILL BE GIVEN CONSIDERATION IN WASHINGTON.

2. IT SEEMS TO US THAT, IF RECENT INDICATIONS ARE A GUIDE, THE DANGERS PERCEIVED BY THE ITALIANS COULD IN FACT BE HEIGHTENED BY JOINT FRENCH-BRITISH HEGEMONY OVER THE EC-NINE. WHILE THIS MIGHT HAVE
SECRET

PAGE 02 BRUSSE 00284 171318Z

THE SALUTARY EFFECT OF HOLDING A POTENTIAL RESURGENCE OF GERMAN PREDOMINANCE AT BAY, IT ALSO THREATENS TO REDUCE THE SMALLER COUNTRIES, WHICH IN MANY WAYS PROVIDE THE BEST HOPE FOR CONTINUED US INFLUENCE ON

THE CONTINENT, TO RELATIVE HELPLESSNESS AND
DEPENDENCE. IT IS THEY WHO HAVE THE GREATEST
STAKE IN THE INSTITUTIONAL PROTECTIONS THAT FURTHER EC
DEVELOPMENTS COULD FURNISH THE ONE-TIME PAWNS OF EUROPEAN
POLITICS. THE RECENTLY PERCEIVED BRITISH TENDENCY
TO PLAY THE FRENCH HAND MAY INDEED BE STRENGTHENED
AS A RESULT OF BRITISH FRUSTRATION AND PIQUE OVER
DIFFERENCES WITH THE GERMANS ON THE REGIONAL FUND
QUESTION.

3. THE SMALL COUNTRIES OF THE EC ARE CAUGHT
BETWEEN TWO CURRENTS. ON THE ONE HAND, THEY DESIRE
TO RETAIN AND BUILD UPON THEIR RELATIONS, AND THE
RELATIONS OF EUROPE AS A WHOLE, WITH THE UNITED
STATES AS A HEDGE AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH,
FRENCH-BRITISH OR GERMAN PREPONDERANCE IN COMMUNITY
AFFAIRS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY WISH TO HOLD
TOGETHER A COMMUNITY THAT IN RECENT MONTHS HAS
REVEALED SERIOUS STRUCTURAL DEFECTS AND THE LACK
OF POLITICAL CEMENT. WE THUS AGREE WITH
EMBASSY ROME'S VIEW THAT THE GOVERNMENTS OF THESE
SMALLER AND BASICALLY FRIENDLY COUNTRIES WOULD BE
RECEPTIVE TO DISCREETLY PUT US SUGGESTIONS WITH
RESPECT TO POLICIES THEY COULD PURSUE TO WARD OFF
A RELAPSE OF EUROPE INTO A PRE-WORLD WAR II
SITUATION.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

SECRET

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